REMARKS

In the action of March 17, 2009, the examiner objected to the abstract of the disclosure; and rejected claims 1 and 3-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Kuo in view of Meyer.

Applicant herein provides the abstract of the disclosure on a separate sheet. Objection to the specification should therefore be withdrawn.

Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to clarify the relationship between the stem body and the core member. The stem body has an interior longitudinal opening (hollow interior) wherein grooves are provided in the inner surface of the stem body which open onto the longitudinal opening/hollow interior. The core member fits within the stem body with mating grooves in the exterior surface thereof. The grooves in the stem body and the core member, respectively, form channels for the flow of fluid from a reservoir to the bristle plate.

The examiner has cited the references to Kuo and Meyer. It is recognized that Meyer discloses a stem portion with grooves in the exterior surface thereof (Figure 6 discloses such a core member). Kuo discloses a toothbrush with a neck portion 31 and a connector 33 within the neck which includes a flow channel 45 therein, leading to a conduit 29 (paragraph 70). What is missing from Kuo (and Meyer) are mating grooves in the inner surface of a stem body which open onto a hollow interior thereof into which the core member fits. There is no teaching in Kuo or Meyer which would lead one skilled in the art to put mating grooves in a stem body to form fluid channels. The examiner simply provides his own teaching relative to that particular structure without any teaching to indicate that such an arrangement is obvious. The required modification of Kuo would involve providing grooves in neck portion 31. However, there is no basis for doing so absent applicant's disclosure. Meyer clearly does not teach or suggest mating grooves in the stem body portion of a toothbrush. Such a modification of Kuo is hence neither logical nor reasonable and does not meet the standard of obviousness. Without any teaching of a hollow stem body having grooves in the inner surface thereof which open onto the hollow

portion, the combination of Kuo and Meyer simply results in a stem body/core member combination which has grooves only in the outer surface of the core member. This is not applicant's claimed invention.

Further, the claims specifically require that the grooves in the stem body and the inner core member form two channels for delivery of fluids to the bristle plate. There is no suggestion in Kuo that channels deliver fluid to the bristle plate. The element 45 only extends partway up into the stem, with a single fluid pathway 29 to the bristle head.

For the above reasons, claims 1 and 11 are patentable over the combination of Kuo and Meyer. Since claims 3-10 and 12 depend from either claim 1 or 11, those claims are also allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

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